

CHAPTER 3: RELEVANT STUDIES AND REPORTS

For more than 10 years, a variety of plans, workshops and design studies have addressed transportation issues in the Canal Neighborhood. These documents were reviewed to understand the impact of these studies on past, current and future transportation planning for the Canal, City of San Rafael and Marin County. This review also helped to recognize what already had been accomplished and what issues have been ongoing concerns of residents and public officials. A summary of the transportation issues is included below. The full text of the analysis of previous planning efforts can be found in Appendix A (Memorandum #1 – Existing Conditions Summary) of this Plan. The following documents were reviewed:

Neighborhood Studies

- Canal Voice, 1996 [1]
- Concept Study for San Rafael Canal Pedestrian Crossing, 1999 [2]
- Medway/Canal Enhancement Project, (2002 – 2008) [3]

City of San Rafael Plans

- Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, February 2002 [4]
- San Rafael General Plan 2020, November 2004 [5]
- San Rafael General Plan 2020: Community Design Charrette, January 2002 [6]

Marin County Studies

- Draft Marin Countywide Plan, August 2005 [7]
- Marin County Congestion Management Agency Marin Bus Transit Futures, February 2001 [8]
- Moving Forward: A 25 Year Transportation Vision for Marin County, February 2003 [9]
- Marin County Transit District Strategic Plan - Existing Systems Report, October 2004 [10]
- Marin County Transit District Short-Range Transit Plan – System Level Analysis, May 2005 [11]
- Marin County Transit District Short Range Transit Plan, January 2006 [12]
- Marin County Transit District Ride and Roll Evaluation Report, May 2004 [13]
- Marin Transit Future On-Board Survey Results. Crain & Associates. March 2000 [14]
- MTC Marin County Welfare to Work Transportation Plan, June 2002 [15]

Regional Studies

- Lifeline Transportation Network Report: 2001 Regional Transportation Plan for the San Francisco Bay Area, December 2001 [16]
- Metropolitan Transportation Commission: Transportation 2030 Plan - Equity Analysis [17]
- Metropolitan Transportation Commission – Transportation 2030 Plan, Appendix V, Summary Report: Phase One Outreach and Involvement Program [18]
- Metropolitan Transportation Commission Transit Connectivity Study, March 2006 [19]
- Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) Project: Final Environmental Impact Report [20]
- Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) Project: Expenditure Plan [21]
- North/South Greenway [22]
- Central San Rafael HOV Gap Closure Project Fact Sheet, 2006. [23]

TRANSPORTATION ISSUES AND SOLUTIONS

The transportation issues and solutions from the review of relevant studies and reports listed above are summarized below. Each comment is followed by a number(s) reference in brackets [] to the document from which it was extracted (see previous list of reviewed documents). The issues and solutions are categorized transit, walking and bicycling, driving and general concerns. The solutions listed include both potential solution ideas, i.e. from the Canal Voice project, and adopted plans, such as projects listed in San Rafael's General Plan.

Transit

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Solutions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too expensive [1] [18] • Poor transportation to schools [1] [4] [13] [14] • Not enough buses and service hours [1] [10] • Discourteous drivers [1] [18] • Poor bus service to school for after school activities and for parents [14] [18] • Service is not adequate to many destinations [9] [15] • Difficulty in knowing where to go, what transit services are available [19] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low cost shuttle to Montecito Shopping and Downtown [1] • More bus service [1] [9] [12] [15] [18] • Longer service hours [1] [9] [12] [15] [16] • Better transit coverage [8] [9] [12] [15] [18] • Buses and shuttles to elementary, middle and high schools [9] [13] [14] • Transit subsidies/passes [13] [15] [18] • Better way-finding signage [19] • Bi-lingual signage and transit information [19]

Driving

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Solutions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial trucks park on residential streets [1] • Lack of parking in the neighborhood [1] • Poor access to post office on Bellam Blvd [1] • People speed, run red lights and do not stop at stop signs [1] [18] • The Bellam corridor is congested, especially at I-580 intersections [1] [4] [18] • Congestion on Francisco Blvd. East [5] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional road in/out of Canal with additional highway undercrossing near Shoreline Parkway [1] [5] • Enforcement [1] • Residential parking permit program [1] • Widen streets /add signals on Francisco Blvd East from Bellam Blvd to Grand Ave Bridge [5]

Walking and Bicycling

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Solutions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting out of neighborhood is hard [1] [4] • Streets are dark [1] • Francisco Blvd East is dangerous for bicycles and pedestrians [1] [4] • Can't easily get to Andersen Dr bike lanes [1] • Bellam Blvd/Francisco Blvd corridors are heavily congested and difficult for bicycle and pedestrian travel. However these corridors have high number of people who are dependent on walking or bicycling as a primary mode of transportation. [4] • Steep routes and heavy traffic for pedestrians and bicyclists traveling from the Canal to Larkspur [4] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canal crossing from Canal St to 3rd St [1] [2] [4] [5] [6] [18] • More street lights [1] • Pathway along the Canal from Grand Ave Bridge to Harbor St [1] [4] [6] • Pedestrian/bicycle connection to Downtown [1] [4] [9] • Francisco Blvd. East– Improve/construct sidewalks and bus stops/bikeways [1] [4] [9] • Crosswalks, stop signs, widen sidewalks and traffic calming along Belvedere St, Larkspur St, Medway St and Canal St. [3] [4] [6] [18] • Bellam and Andersen Drive Intersection – Add pedestrian signals with push buttons. Add curb cuts on all four corners [4] • Freeway overcrossing from Francisco Blvd East to Francisco Blvd West [1] [4] [5] [9] • Bikeways on Bellam Blvd, Harbor St/Canal St, Front/Mill St, Kerner Blvd, Francisco Blvd and Medway St [1] [4] • NWP Right-of-Way from the Transit Center through the Larkspur Tunnel [4] [9] [20] [22] • Implement Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan [5] [9] [18]

General Concern

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Solutions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desire for neighborhoods of integrity and distinctive hometown character. Neighborhood circulation is an important aspect of neighborhood quality including streets that are safe, pleasant and attractive to walk, cycle and drive. [5] [7] [9] [18] • San Rafael to have a diversified, cost-effective and resource-efficient transportation network that provides mobility for all users [5] [9] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medway Road improvements are starting with undergrounding of utilities in 2006-7 and streetscape improvements in 2008. [3] • Mode shift from single-occupant vehicles to transit, walking, bicycling, carpooling and low-impact vehicles. [5] [9] [18] • Implement Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan [5] [7] [9] [18]

